

ARTICLE APPEARED
ON PAGE A3

NEW YORK TIMES
20 September 1985

Bar More Russians, Weinberger Says

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Special to The New York Times

WASHINGTON, Sept. 19 — Defense Secretary Caspar W. Weinberger said today that the United States should reduce the number of Soviet citizens it allows to work and travel here in order to curtail their collection of American military technology.

The Defense Secretary, speaking at a news conference the day after his department released a study detailing a widespread Soviet quest for American military technology, said that the number of Russians in the United States was "far out of proportion" to the number of Americans in the Soviet Union and that "a reduction in numbers would be a useful start."

Mr. Weinberger asserted that "the Soviets don't send people to countries like the United States unless they are fully equipped, fully trained, and either part of K.G.B., or might just as well be."

Mr. Weinberger took several opportunities at today's wide-ranging news conference to reiterate his harsh view of Soviet behavior and intentions.

The Defense Secretary renewed his charge that Soviet troops in East Germany deliberately rammed a United

States patrol vehicle earlier this month, brushing aside efforts by State Department and Pentagon spokesmen to play down the incident.

After Mr. Weinberger originally described the incident on a television program Sunday, other Administration officials said he had overdramatized the incident, in which a Soviet truck side-swiped an American jeep beside a road near a Soviet communications center. State Department and Pentagon officials said Monday that the Russians' intentions in the episode were not clear.

Speaking today of the incident, Mr. Weinberger said: "The word 'intentional' was used a few days ago. It's used again today. I don't think it could be any other way." He added, "I also think driver training is clearly indicated."

He again denounced the Soviet unwillingness to apologize for the shooting of Maj. Arthur D. Nicholson Jr., a member of the United States military liaison mission in East Germany in March.

Shortly before his news conference, Mr. Weinberger attended a ceremony at which Major Nicholson was given a rare posthumous promotion, to the rank of lieutenant colonel.

In his news briefing, Mr. Weinberger

also rejected suggestions that the Administration should postpone future tests of anti-satellite weapons or consider any limits on the President's space-based missile defense research program, the Strategic Defense Initiative, to encourage harmony at the summit meeting between President Reagan and Mikhail S. Gorbachev, the Soviet leader, scheduled for Nov. 19-20 in Geneva.

On the matter of cutting the Soviet presence in the United States, Mr. Weinberger did not discuss numbers, but indicated he "completely" shared the view of Assistant Secretary of Defense Richard N. Perle, who proposed on Wednesday that the number of Soviet officials here be cut until that number equals the number of American officials in the Soviet Union.

Mr. Weinberger said that how the Soviet presence should be reduced is "not my department."

The State Department said the Soviet Union has about 980 diplomats and staff members in the United States, counting those at the United Nations or on temporary assignments, while the Americans have about 280 in the Soviet Union.

The State Department has said that one large reason for the difference is that the Soviet Embassy in Washington and the Soviet Consulate in San Francisco have 153 Russians who serve in such jobs as secretaries and maintenance workers, while the American Embassy in Moscow and the consulate in Leningrad rely almost entirely on Soviet employees to do those jobs.

The Soviet Union also has 90 journalists and commercial representatives, to 62 for the United States.

"We've had a lot of discussion and people who say there should be very open trade and that's one of the ways of getting a better relationship and so on," Mr. Weinberger said. "And it's important, I think, to realize how they can take material or information or technology that doesn't appear to have very much military value and turn it into that."

In reaction to a Navy spy case, Congress passed an amendment this summer to a routine State Department bill requiring that by February the Administration devise a plan to even the numbers of Soviet citizens on official business in the United States and United States citizens on official business in the Soviet Union.